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SUBJECT: BOSNIA: INFORMATION ON SECURITY DIALOGUES

REF: STATE 112900

¶1. This cable outlines, per reftel, ongoing security and defense dialogues between Bosnia and the United States.

Bilateral Defense Consultations

¶2. The United States and Bosnia have organized bilateral defense consultations on an ad hoc basis since December 2007. The first was organized in Washington in December 2007 and chaired by then DepSecDef Gordon England. England came to Bosnia for consultations in a reduced format in October 2008. The next bilateral defense consultations are planned in Bosnia in December 2009 or January 2010, to be chaired on the U.S. side at the PDASD level. While there is no formally set schedule for bilateral defense consultations, our Bosnian interlocutors expect that some sort of bilateral consultations at the DASD level or higher will take place on a yearly basis.

Adriatic Charter

¶3. In December 2008 Bosnia joined the regional U.S. - Adriatic Charter which has separate bi-annual meetings of Ministers of Defense, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, MFA Political Directors and Chiefs of Defense. Bosnia is the current chair. The United States will be represented at this fall's Defense Ministerial in Sarajevo at the Assistant Secretary level. In the past, the U.S. has been represented at the Foreign Ministerial by a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State or higher. The political directors meetings are typically attended by local embassy officers on behalf of the United States. Bosnia plans to host an A5 Chief of Defense Conference in May 2010. At the last A5 Chief of Defense Conference in Tirana, Deputy Commander of U.S. European Command represented the United States.

State Partnership Program

¶4. The Maryland National Guard has frequent engagement with Bosnia's military establishment through the State Partnership Program. The Adjutant General of Maryland travels to Bosnia on an ad hoc basis to discuss the State Partnership Program which provides technical assistance to Bosnia's military to help modernize and make Bosnia's Armed Forces a more reliable coalition partner and a more credible aspirant to NATO membership. Representatives of Bosnia's Parliament, as well as the Chairman of the Presidency have visited the Maryland National Guard in the past year.

EUCOM

15. U.S. European Command has run exercises in Bosnia on an ad hoc but continuing basis, ranging from table-top exercises on disaster relief involving all of Bosnia's levels of government as well as its neighbors to last years Combined Endeavor 2009, a EUCOM sponsored communications exercise that brought teams from 39 NATO allies and partner countries to Banja Luka. There is no formal agreement to continue exercises in Bosnia on a set schedule, but EUCOMs engagement of Bosnia remains high and continuing. These defense engagements typically include a long process of military-military security dialogues at a high level.

COMMENT

16. (SBU) Our continuing military and security relationship plays a vital role in Bosnia, where defense reform has been the most successful and meaningful reform since the Dayton Peace Accords and one critical to security and confidence in the Bosnian state. Our political-military engagement has the dual purpose of outlining for Bosnia's leaders the reforms necessary to make progress towards their goal of NATO membership and to promote the perception that the United States, having made a tremendous investment in Bosnia's security since ending the war in 1995, is here to stay until the job is done.

ENGLISH